GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:192
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2002
SURPLUS FOODGRAINS
DUKHA BHAGAT

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of surplus food-grains available for export during the last year;

(b) whether the quality of these foodgrains were below international level;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the measures taken by the Government to ensure the production of high quality foodgrains and availability of the relevant techniques to the farmers; and

(e) the efforts made to Maximise export of agricultural products?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH)

(a) TO (c) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN THE REPLY TO PART (A) TO (E) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.192 DUE REPLY ON 02.12.2002.

(a) A quantity of 50 lakh metric tonnes of wheat and 30 metric tonnes of rice was offered from the Central Pool for export during 2001-02.

(b) and (c) The Government has allowed Food Corporation of India (FCI) to offer rice and wheat for export from the central Pool to Public Sector Undertakings, State Agencies and Private Exporters.The exporters are allowed to identify/choose the export worthy stock before loading. The same quality of rice and wheat lifted from FCI is required to be exported.

(d) The Government has taken several measures to ensure the protection of high quality foodgrains and availability of the relevant techniques to the farmers. The measures taken by the Government include promotion of watershed development programmes, emphasis on developing and promoting new technologies, measures for increasing availability of agricultural credit, credit linked subsidy scheme for augmenting storage/cold storage capacity, Technology Mission for Integrated Development of horticulture in North-eastern States, market infirmation network and National Agricultural Insurance scheme. The Government have also switched over from the conventional schematic approach to macro management mode from November, 2000 for providing assistance to States. The Macro Management scheme integrates 27 schemes into one for supplementing and complementing the efforts of State Governments through work plans. This gives flexibility to States to address specific problems faced by them depending on local requirements, avoid overlapping in the contents of different schemes and aim at all-round development of agriculture. The Government encourages farmers to increase production through price policy which includes implementation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Market Intervention Scheme (MIS).

(e) The steps taken to increase the export of agricultural products include rhe following:-

(i) Setting up of Agricultural Export Zones.

(ii) Providing assistance for raising small and large nurseries for production of good quality planting material, upgradation of technical know-how of farmers through demonstrations, trainings and publicity, rejuvenation of old plantations, area expansion, improving productivity and training of farmers.

(iii) Grant of financial assistance for improved packaging, strengthening of quality control and modernisation of processing units.

(iv) Arranging promotional campaigns such as buyer-seller meets and participation in important international fairs and exhibitions.

(v) Providing assistance in development of data base and dissemination of market information.

(vi) Providing assistance for setting up of laboratories for testing of products to ensure quality, eliminating contamination and ensuring freedom from fungi and bacteria.

(vii) Market Development Assistance for export related activities such as study tours, participation in fairs etc.

(viii) Reimbursement of cetain WTO admissible costs on account of marketting and transport for export of wheat, wheat products and rice from FCI stocks.